



Delaware State Arts Council Meeting Minutes  
September 20, 2017  
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Inner City Cultural League (ICCL)  
39 S. West St., Dover DE 19901

**Attending:** Council: Mack Wathen (Chair), Donna Blakey, Lori Crawford, Robert Fitzgerald, David Fleming, Janis Julian, Mary Ann Miller, Heather Morrissey, Cheryle Pringle, Michael Quattrociocchi, John Sarro

Staff: Paul Weagraff, Sheila Ross, Kristin Pleasanton, Dana Wise, Roxanne Stanulis, Katie West, Leeann Wallett, Gwen Henderson

Public: Reuben Salters (Founder of ICCL & Dover City Councilman), Art Jenkins (Controller General's Office)

**Absent:** Madeleine Bayard, Tina Betz, Michael Kalmbach, Ralph Kuebler, Jon Newsom

The meeting was called to order at 10am

**Chair's Report – Mack Wathen**

Mr. Wathen thanked Mr. Reuben Salters, founder of Inner City Cultural League (ICCL) and former Dover City Councilman for hosting the meeting in ICCL's new facility. "If you take a look at their brochure they have a host of activities from robotics, science, social skills, orchestra, and cultural education. Like a lot of our small institutions, they do an awful lot for our communities and I'd like to thank them for that."

The House of Representatives has passed the budget on to the US Senate. The NEA funding that was in peril is being funded in this version at \$145m for fiscal year 2018. It represents about a 3.5% budget cut, much less than White House has proposed, which was total elimination of the NEA. Hopefully the budget will be approved at least at this level. Similarly, in Delaware the June 2017 session ended and the Division of the Arts came out better than could have been the case. Hopefully next year, will be less contentious.

The biennial Arts Summit is coming up on October 30<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Wathen encouraged Council members to reply to DDOA to help out at the summit, if time permits. It's a terrific event and a real opportunity for all the arts organizations across the state to interact and get good ideas on things they can do to strengthen their organizations.

Finally, there are a number of Council terms ending. Members are officially on the Council until the governor sends a letter saying "thank you for your service." The governor's appointment office has two applications so far. Mr. Wathen encouraged members to recruit possible candidates. If you know someone interested, have them go online and apply and give them Mr. Wathen's or Paul Weagraff's contact information. The Council needs people particularly from Sussex County at this time, but we take people from all parts of the state.

**Reuben Salters – Inner City Cultural League of Dover**

Mr. Salters welcomed council members and DDOA staff to ICCL's new space, now two years old, "made possible by friends like you." He pointed out that the Blakey family in particular has also been very instrumental in helping them to achieve their goals. Mr. Salters talked about the organization and some of the programs they have such as after school academics, music programs, dance, science, social skills, intervention talks, and most importantly cultural education. They also feed the children. Orchestral

instruments were donated for the kids to learn and they have a steel drum band as well. ICCL also hosts the Annual African American Festival in Dover. Mr. Salters invited council members to visit any time.

### **Director's Report – Paul Weagraff**

#### **Partnership News**

The US House of Representatives has approved \$145 million in funding for the NEA for next year, a \$5 million decrease from the current fiscal year. Earlier in the year, the Trump Administration had proposed the elimination of the National Endowments for the Arts, Humanities, and Institute for Museum and Library Services.

Laura Scanlan, State & Regional Director, has announced that she will be retiring from her role at the National Endowment for the Arts, effective in November. She has been with the NEA, working with state partnerships, for eight years. She served as the Division of the Arts director from 2001 through 2006.

In partnership with the National Council on Agricultural Life & Labor Research Fund (NCALL) and the National Endowment for the Arts, the Delaware Division of the Arts contracted with consultant Susan Detwiler to facilitate a symposium on the topic of Restoring Central Dover. This half-day event, scheduled for September 13, 2017, convened nearly 50 individuals from the Dover community—including arts, business, and community leaders—to consider possibilities of integrating the arts sector more effectively in community decision-making around such topics as housing, infrastructure, and community engagement.

Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, in partnership with the Delaware Division of the Arts, has announced \$13,300 in grants through the Special Presenter Initiatives program for FY2018. Eight grants will support engagements at the Christina Cultural Arts Center, Coastal Concerts, The Freeman Stage, Market Street Music Corporation, University of Delaware, and Wilmington Wintergrass.

#### **Recognition of Fellowship Artists**

Paul Weagraff sent invitations to members of the General Assembly for the August 30<sup>th</sup> Artist Fellowship reception at the Biggs Museum on August 30<sup>th</sup>. Representative Paradee attended. Senator Smyk and Representative Short informed us that they were unable to attend, but planned to write congratulatory letters to the artists that reside in their districts.

On September 14<sup>th</sup>, the Biggs Museum hosted an evening of readings by the Division's literary fellows, followed by an open mike for local writers. The event was well attended and very warmly received. Roxanne Stanulis and Paul Weagraff attended from the Division.

#### **Professional Development Opportunities**

Delaware Alliance for Nonprofit Advancement (DANA) is offering two financial workshops this fall in three locations each, and the Division of the Arts is offering a \$40 scholarship to all Division GOS grantee arts organizations, making the workshop either free or \$40, depending on DANA membership status. From the Division's email notification to grantees:

1. Financial Literacy - \$40 for DANA members/\$80 non-members  
Sept 19 (Wilmington), 20 (Dover), and 21 (Georgetown)

This 3-hours hands-on workshop will help you review and evaluate your financial statements and Form 990.

2. Financial Excellence - \$40 for DANA members/\$80 non-members  
Oct 17 (Wilmington), 18 (Dover), and 19 (Georgetown)



This workshop is a comprehensive review of the leadership aspects of managing the financial health and sustainability of a nonprofit.

### **Arts Summit**

Kristin Pleasanton provided updates on planning for the Arts Summit, and Sheila Dean Ross invited Council members to sign up as volunteers for the day.

Legislators received the following personal email invitation from the Director to attend the Summit.

Within the next few days, you should be receiving in the mail our 2017 Arts Summit brochure, *Arts for All*, announcing the Delaware Division of the Arts' biennial summit, scheduled for Monday, October 30, 2017, at the Dover Downs Hotel and Casino.

This important event is the largest convening of Delaware's arts community, bringing together more than 250 arts administrators, artists, board members, and business leaders for a day filled with workshops, performances, speakers, and networking.

I would like to invite you, as a guest of the Delaware Division of the Arts, to attend this year's Summit. This is a great opportunity for you to meet members of the arts community, and to hear about a variety of arts and community-related topics facing Delaware's arts sector.

### **Technology Projects**

- Marketing tracking and reporting upgrades. Leeann Wallett will talk more about this in her marketing presentation.
- Cloud-based grants management software that will upgrade and streamline application and review processes. Katie West has been diligently researching options that other state and regional agencies have been using. The Department of Technology and Information has participated in the process as well, providing guidance on the state's technology requirements.

### **FY2018 Rolling Grants Awarded**

- Artists in Residence: 1 grant, \$3,500
- Arts Access: 3 grants, \$3,000
- Total: 4 grants, \$6,500

The Division of the Arts received word from the Delaware Chamber Music Festival that they will be dissolving.

"It is with great sadness that we write to inform you that the board members of the Delaware Chamber Music Festival, after 32 brilliant seasons of bringing great performances to varied audiences in Delaware, has voted to close shop. Last season, Barbara Govatos let the Board know that she would be resigning at the end of the 2017 season, and Advisory members of the Board came forward to think strategically about how to move forward. However, it was decided to finish out the 32<sup>nd</sup> season and just see. In the meantime, a flurry of Board member resignations occurred for various reasons, leaving just six members, none of whom felt able to take a leadership position. This very difficult and painful decision was made at the latest meeting of the Board, August 30, 2017."

Over the past 32 years, DCMF has provided high-quality classical music through a weeklong festival to a devoted niche audience at the Music School of Delaware. They close on solid financial footing, and plan to donate remaining assets to nonprofit music organizations with similar missions.

**For your calendar**

October 30, 2017	2017 Fall Arts Summit, 8:45 a.m. to 4 p.m.
November 11, 2017	Artist Fellowship Reception, Camp Rehoboth, Rehoboth Beach, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
December 13, 2017	State Arts Council Meeting, New Castle County (TBD), 10 a.m. to noon

**Leeann Wallett – [Marketing & Communications Review PowerPoint](#)**

The Division of the Arts new website soft-launched back in June for about a week-long test period to make sure everything's working. The Division is working with the Government Information Center (GIC), a partner state agency, to create a fully customized website. We're now on a completely cloud-based system. The most significant change is that our web address/domain name has changed to [arts.delaware.org](http://arts.delaware.org). The redirect from artsdel.org will end in mid-October.

Some of the highlights are:

- Created the entire homepage from scratch with standard navigation to find information.
- Categories based on the user.
- Customizable banner allows for making changes easily.
- Program event section that changes based on what's going on at the time, such as Poetry Out Loud (POL), artist fellowships and some of the [DelawareScene](#) information, poets laureate, etc. We've also included the latest news where we can create content consistently and customize the information.
- A new section that has grants based on the programs where the user can click and find descriptions of each and go to their respective pages.
- The news section is totally customized to suit the Division's needs. There's an RSS feed that's constantly updated. News from [news.delaware.gov](http://news.delaware.gov) pulls news and creates press releases. We also pull news bits from [arts-e-news](#) and share information about partnerships, individual artists, and what's going on in our community.
- We've integrated the podcasts where we have interviews with artists and arts organizations throughout Delaware.
- We worked with ZeroDefect to have [DelawareScene](#) redesigned. The redesign has helped it to become more responsive. It's more mobile friendly as research shows that more than 50% of users are using mobile and tablet devices to look up information. We've put much more emphasis on typography, making things much easier to read. Image sizes have increased because that drives people to click and learn more about many of the arts organizations in the entire state. We are able to customize, update, and edit based on what's happening around the state. There are feature sections and a location-based map as well.
- We've standardized the digital banner ads because many digital marketing firms use very specific sizes. We offer inexpensive 2-week or 4-week advertising campaigns for nonprofit and for profit organizations. All of the money is funneled back in to advertising [DelawareScene](#), promoting it as the go-to tool for Delaware events. It's also a requirement for grantees to add their events. We've been working with tourism in all three counties to integrate information into their calendar systems as well.

Notable events highlighted from last year:

- TEDX Wilmington had the Twin Poets Laureate speak. They were the first performance-based lecture and were truly well received.
- We had a visit from the chairwoman of NEA – Jane Chu – her first official visit to Delaware. It entailed a daylong visit to some of the NEA funded projects at The Delaware Contemporary to see artists in residence, and the Wilmington creative district with some of our VIP's such as Mayor Purzycki, Senator Coons, and other arts advocates. The visit included town halls at The Grand and Biggs Museum. It was truly a successful day. The whole day was initiated by Senator Coons. Ms. Chu drew a sketch of Artist Avenue on Shipley Street in Wilmington and the Biggs bird sculpture in the front of the building.
- We sponsored the Delaware Creative Aging workshop at Modern Maturity Center in Dover in early December. The executive director of the National Center for Creative Aging is conducting a workshop at our 2017 Arts Summit.
- POL finals were held earlier this year. Lt. Governor Bethany Hall-Long attended and took pictures. Cecilia Ergueta was named state champion. From that we've seen community building with the POL champion: Ms. Ergueta was extremely active this summer, visiting a few places, did presenting spoken word, and attending the annual meeting of poets at Gallery 37. We also had a private meet & greet with Governor Carney, along with Paul and the past poet laureate, JoAnn Balingit, where the Governor presented the school trophy for POL.
- Representative Debra Heffernan sponsored the Arts Advocacy Day which was hosted by the [Delaware Arts Alliance](#). The focus was "arts education the key to Delaware's workforce of the future." A panel discussion at lunchtime was live-streamed with the help of DTI. Jeff Poulin, Arts Education Manager from Americans for the Arts (AFTA), and Dr. Susan Bunting, Delaware Secretary of Education, co-moderated a panel that consisted of businesses, arts organizations, and artist representatives from each county. Our POL champion and 1<sup>st</sup> runner up opened the House and Senate with a description of POL and a small presentation.
- One of the projects Ms. Wallett has been working on with a design agency is to create digital designs to be able to bring together all the designs to promote arts in Delaware.
- Digital advertising – There were two campaigns with [DelawareToday](#) targeting specific groups based on keyword searches.
- Data visualizations tools – the Division has purchased social media enhancement software.
- The What's On App has been deactivated due to technical failures.

Ms. Wallett has been working hard on partnerships and being more proactive in getting the Division "out there." Ms. Wallett has introduced herself to many editors throughout the state, and recently served as a panelist for the Millennial Summit.

### **Paul Weagraff**

2018 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the longest federal troop occupation since the Civil War. It occurred in Wilmington. Delaware Art Museum and UD initiated a convening to coordinate an umbrella-awareness of events and opportunities to recognize the event and what it means to Wilmington through recognition of related events, research and exhibitions. There is a plan for a portal page to embrace this with a calendar of events related to it, so the Division is talking about how we can utilize DelawareScene for this.

Paul Weagraff met with members of the Delaware Division of Small Business Development & Tourism to start talking about how we can work more closely with them. They're trying to bring new businesses to

Delaware and Weagraff provided language as to how the arts and culture contribute to the quality of Delaware. They're interested in how they can be of support to those Delaware artists who see themselves as entrepreneurs.

### **Kristin Pleasanton**

The Division convened a joint meeting on 9/13/17 at Dover Library with the Restoring Central Dover Committee, the National Council on Agricultural Life & Labor Research Fund, Inc (NCALL), and the arts community in Dover to discuss possibilities of creative placemaking in Dover.

About 50 attendees that included:

- Council members Lori Crawford & Donna Blakey
- Dover business leaders
- Dover area community leaders
- Arts organization representatives
- Libraries
- NCALL staff
- Educators
- Individual artists
- Public Health
- DHCA

We focused on what Dover should look like 10 years from now, and some common themes emerged:

- Individuals in the arts need to be more proactive and get more involved being part of the civic life of their communities
- Importance of safety, cleanliness, and transportation
- Importance of arts education for all children
- Communication and transparency with the government
- Community leaders need to be more visible

Participants were asked to sign up for working groups which included transportation & safety, housing, community engagement, education, and to join a steering committee to take the foundation of what was talked about and make action plans. Over 30 people signed up.

The facilitator will generate a report of all the comments and information recorded. NCALL will approve members for working groups and we'll have a follow up session with the steering committee. Overall, it was a very productive day.

### **Public Comment**

**Donna Blakey** – “Sylvia Carson, director of the Positive Points Program sponsored by Arbor Management which provides low income housing across the, gave me information about the program. They get the kids in these communities to participate in theatrical performances throughout the state and use a combination of artistic engagement and support for ongoing education.

**Art Jenkins** with Controller Generals Office, the legislative budget office came out to observe. – “Most of the deliberations in legislation around finance rely on our office for our expertise. I am pleased to see the new website design.”

**Old Business – None**

**New Business – None**

**Lunch**

**Motion and second to adjourn meeting at 12:15pm - All in Favor.**